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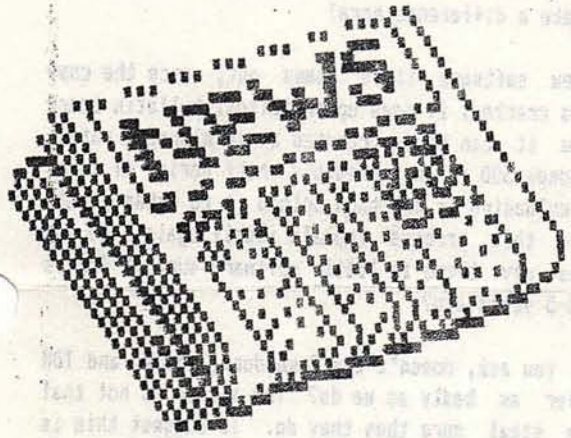

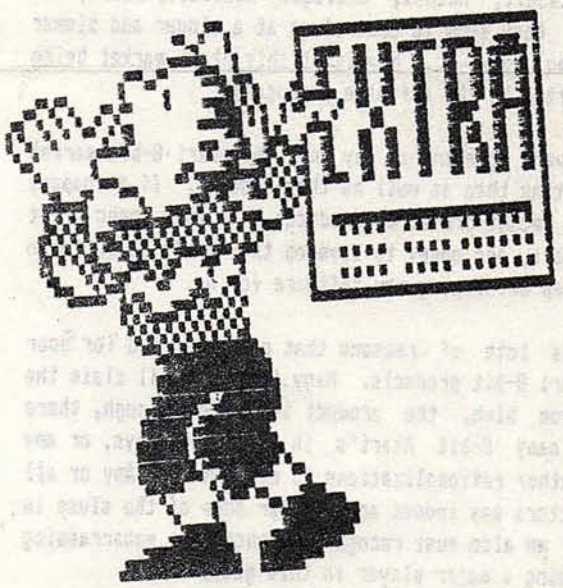

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President's Corner

We've all heard the stories of lemmings running off cliffs, diving to their certain deaths into a watery grave in the ocean. I'm not a student of animal behavior, so I don't know if this actually happens or if it is just a popular misconception. If it is so, it makes you wonder how it is that there are any lemmings left in the world when they seem so dedicated to performing a ritual that will end in their eventual demise. I guess they don't have the intuition or intelligence to see the logical conclusion of their self destructive urges. But they are just dumb animals, not smart like us humans.

What has this to do with the President's Column in the SCAT Newsletter? I am using the example of the lemmings to illustrate a point of great importance to Atari computer owners.

Most of the people reading this column either own an Atari 8-bit system or have owned one. A common problem for us is the lack of new software for our 400/800/XL/XE computer. Oh, we still see new products from companies like Antic, Epyx, X'Lent, Electronic Arts, Activision, Reevesoft, Infocom, DataSoft, Access, Sublogic, Accolade, Atari, and others, but they seem to come along at a slower and slower pace as time goes on. Why isn't this Atari market being better supported by the software producers?

The software companies say that the Atari 8-bit market isn't supporting them as well as they used to. If a company can't make a decent profit on products that they spend a lot of time, effort, and money to develop they won't be quite so likely to keep developing new software for us.

There are lots of reasons that can be quoted for poor sales of Atari 8-bit products. Many Atarians will claim the price is too high, the product isn't good enough, there aren't as many 8-bit Atari's in use these days, or any number of other rationalizations to explain it. Any or all of these factors may indeed account for some of the slump in sales, but we also must recognize a much more embarrassing factor as being a major player in this game.

Yep, Jeff is going to talk about software piracy. In this society we live in, piracy means stealing. I'm not going to try to cover the arguments made by software thieves for supporting their practices or even try to counter those arguments from the anti-piracy side of the issue. I'd rather just deal with the consequences of software theft.

Quite simply, it means more of the same environment we have been dealing with for the past two years. If the same software that sells successfully for Commodore, Apple, and IBM systems flops miserably in the Atari market something is wrong! What can we, as Atari-owning consumers, do to try changing this situation?

We can't make more people buy Atari computers. WE can't change the price of software (although there is a lot of software that is very affordable out there, so overpriced software can't even be an issue). We CAN write letters to software companies to convince them to provide us with more software, but ultimately sales will be the determining factor. So that leaves us with buying the software that is out there.

I'm not suggesting that we run out and buy software just for the sake of buying it, hoping that our investments will assure a brighter future for us. I am just urging everyone not to steal software. Sales lost to piracy is one of the few things that each and every one of us can have an effect on. We can make a difference here!

When a new software title comes out, once the copy protection is cracked, it goes up on illegal bulletin board systems where it can be distributed at an alarming rate. One copy becomes 500 in an incredibly short period of time. The person downloading it can then upload it to other pirate boards, where this process repeats itself again. Do you begin to see why there is little software support for us compared to 3-5 years ago?

Why then, you ask, doesn't the Commodore, Apple, and IBM markets suffer as badly as we do? The answer is not that Atari people steal more than they do. To suggest this is silly. There are as many, likely more, software thieves in any one of those camps than there is in the Atari world. The answer lies in the fact that there are still enough people in those camps that are legitimately buying the software for their systems in sufficient numbers to make it viable for software companies to continue developing products for them at a healthy rate. So we may not have as many pirates, but we don't have enough buyers.

The solution is simple. All you have to do is say "No." Like the current campaign to say no to drugs and abuse, you only have to say no to stealing software. If you find yourself in the position to receive an illegal copy of software, just say no. If it's something you want to have, go out and buy it. If it's something that you don't feel is worth the money, it's okay not to buy it, but for your sake and all our sake, DON'T STEAL IT!

We vote for continued support for our systems with our dollars. Withhold those dollars and support becomes more and more scarce until there will be no more software

CONTINUED ON PAGE 14

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Trackball to Mouse

The following instructions explain how to modify an Atari trackball (model number CX22) to work like a mouse for the Atari ST (complete with left and right buttons).

To start with, if the instructions here are followed PROPERLY (and you don't fry a chip) it should work just fine, however, I make no claims as to the accuracy of this file, nor do I guarantee that this will work for you.

NOTE: This modification will NOT retain the original "trackball" or "joystick" modes of the ball.

WARNING: The following ONLY applies to the model CX22 trackball! The CX22 can usually be identified by its case (the case matches the 800XL series computer) which is dark brown on top with a white bottom. When in doubt, flip it over and look for a model number!

If you have the older Atari trackball (solid black case), don't despair, there is also a text file on modifying it to work like a mouse. The file can be found in the Delphi Atari ST database if you need it (search with TRACK as a keyword in the ST database).

Things you'll need:

1. An Atari trackball, model CX22
2. A Radio Shack joystick extension cable (part # 276-1978)
3. A low-wattage soldering iron (15 watt, or close to that)
4. A Volt-Ohm meter (you'll need to trace some wires)
5. About 2 feet of wire (small gauge will be easier to work with, such as the wire in the joystick cable)

Before we get into this, if you're not familiar with electronics or soldering to IC's, PLEASE have someone else do this for you. Also, DON'T trust the colors on the wires in the Radio Shack joystick extension cord! Every one that I buy is different (Radio Shack seems to use a random color coding... makes it tough on us guys), so you'll need to trace the wires to see what pin on the plug they go too (that's what the ohmmeter is for).

To open up the trackball, remove the 4 screws on the bottom of its "wings"; it still wont come apart after that because there are 2 friction-fit posts inside it (both near the center of the case, one at the top and the other at the bottom). Pry it apart slowly and gently to avoid breaking them. Once you open up the trackball, remove the old joystick cable (it doesn't have all the wires we need). Now get your Radio Shack joystick cable and clip off the MALE end and discard it (the end with the metal pins sticking out).

In case you don't aren't familiar with the the pin numbers of the joystick cable (the Radio Shack cable doesn't have them numbered, either), here's the layout:

Looking at the JOYSTICK end of the cable (female end):

```
    5  4  3  2  1
     9  8  7  6
```

Strip about 6 inches of the outer jacket off to expose the individual wires (you'll need a little length to work with). The only pin we won't be using is pin 5, so trace it first, and clip off its wire (now it's out of the way for good!). Next trace all the remaining wires to their plug pin numbers and write it down someplace.

Look at the IC's in the trackball. Find the one marked LM339 (it's a 14-pin IC sitting away from the other IC's, directly south of where the ball sits).

The IC's pins are numbered as follows (standard IC numbering): (looking at the top of the IC)

```
                14 13 12 11 10 9  8
          notch --> )
                1  2  3  4  5  6  7
```

Make the following connections to it:

(Plug pin #	to	LM339 pin #)
1	-	2
2	-	1
3	-	14
4	-	13

Connect the following wires to the connector that the original joystick cable was plugged into (look on the PC board, the connector's pin 1 is numbered):

(plug pin # to PC board connector pin #)

- 8 (ground) - pin 1 (closest to center of the case)
- 7 (+5 v) - pin 2 (to the left of pin 1)

Jump a lead from one connector of each fire-button pad (right and left pads) to pin 1 on the PC board connector (in other words, ground them).

Make the following connections to the other side of the fire-button pads (we're going to separate the right and left buttons):

(plug pin # to	--- pad)
6	- left fire pad
9	- right fire pad

CONTINUED ON PAGE 14

TEXTPRO WORDPROCESSOR (8-bit)
PUBLIC DOMAIN

Developed by Mike Collins and Ronnie Riche
Reviewed by Clinton Pierce (G.A.G.)

Reprinted From MICHIGAN ATARI MAGAZINE by permission.

"Review Textpro?" Sure, I had used the program before, but I didn't have the docs and really didn't know all of the features. So, I went and bought a copy from the GAG library. HOLY COW! This has got more bells and whistles than 1030 Express!!

First of all, I am using Textpro 1.2a (with extension 2.5e) on an Atari 130XE with a ramdisk setup. The program's built-in printer control codes do not work well with my Star SG-10 (but these can be changed, so easily!). The particular disk I have has all of the author's help files (accessed by hitting OPTION or HELP and the appropriate key for the menu you want to see).

In addition to all of the normal word processor features (Find, Replace, Insert, I/O operations, Move, Paste and about 40 more), it supports user defined fonts (which can be created with Create-a-Font, a public domain font maker available from most club libraries), an unusually large buffer (about 126 sectors, larger than Atariwriter or Home Writer), and macros.

Until I read the Textpro docs I thought a macro was a fish of the family Scombridae. In layman's terms: a macro allows several operations to be done at once using a single keystroke. So far, I've only used the macros on the disk, however, there are serious possibilities in this. My favorite, (in writing this review) is Swap , it allows me to work on two different documents using my ramdisk as a buffer for the second document and just by pressing the START button, being able to work on two things at once. Or, if you're like me, and can't remember how to write a modified block letter, all you have to do is create a macro that sets up the form and fill in the blanks.

Not only did the authors read the Wordstar manual and include every possible feature, they also must have spent a few hours with De Re Atari and Atari Technical Notes. I have not been able to hang the program nor have I been able to do anything to snag it that couldn't be fixed with a System Reset. The program is fast, its I/O operations are quicker than other commercial programs and more foolproof to boot. (Ani plans fore a spelling chekre in the futuer?)

CONTINUED ON THE NEXT PAGE

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Complaints Dept: Actually, I have no major complaints. The search and replace could be a bit faster (to change "and" to "sand" in a 126 sector document takes 92 seconds). This is actually the second review I wrote for Textpro. The first one got wiped out at 1am when I loaded a file right over top of it. In my drowsiness I thought it would merely append it to the bottom. This is where a message like "Erase File in Memory (y/n)" would be really helpful.

In conclusion, I would just like to say that Textpro is MUST for anybody who does serious word processing. It is public domain, meaning that you can download it from you local BBS or buy it from your Atari User Group. In my opinion, this program could blow out most other commercial programs and would make an excellent addition to any library (be sure to get the accompanying Doc files too).

(MICHIGAN ATARI MAGAZINE PUBLISHER'S NOTE: The TEXTPRO revolution in word processing is just beginning. Already another new version (2.5r) has been released that allows use with a RS-232 handler in place. Now that might not seem like much, but the doc for the new version suggests putting it on the same disk as EXPRESS 850... call EXPRESS "AUTORUN.SYS" and TEXTPRO "DUP.SYS", and any reset from EXPRESS will take you into TEXTPRO... while a simple command from TEXTPRO would return you to EXPRESS... all in RAMDISKS if you like for INSTANT SWAPPING. YIKES.

And if that weren't enough, the new version has a VERY CLEVER and EASY system to divide and re-merge files that are too large to work on in one piece, a problem that the size of the work space in any word processor often causes. You simply place the cursor where you want to cut off the partially loaded oversize file, and press a button. The "upper" part of the file disappears into a new file (in a RAMDISK if you like) and the file continues to load into the newly opened area of work space. When you get to where you want to be, edit as you like, and another keypress reassembles the entire file. YIKETY YIKE!

This file divide MACRO will soon be available as an EXTENSION file for use with version 1.2a (which still has it's own virtues that were left out for compatibility reasons in version 2.5r). I also wrote my own MACRO that will take any format file I find (ST, ASCII, ANYTHING!) and in seconds remove, replace, redo, reformat it into 1) the proper style for printing in this magazine (paragraph notation and all), 2) another version with modifications for display on the BBS, and 3) yet another for uploading to COMPUSERVE. All while I just watch.

More EXTENSION files are also planned for other special purposes. Additionally, the authors of TEXTPRO are planning an 80 COLUMN version that should work with the MIO (from ICD CORP), the ACE-80 CARTRIDGE (from AMIABLE COMPUTING), and the ATARI 80 column box (assuming it is ever released). With this modification, TEXTPRO will fulfill ALL of my own desires in a word processing package, since the current versions do not have a "preview" mode. Even so, I use Textpro EXCLUSIVELY now for work in both my profession and for this Magazine.

I DO have two complaints about TEXTPRO. First, sector counts are not displayed in the disk directories, in order to display more of them at once. I don't know about anyone else, but the size of a file is IMPORTANT to me. Second, if you put TWO SPACES after a period (a standard format for publications), and the wordwrap during the printing causes the second to wrap to the next line, it is NOT SUPPRESSED (the first IS, as they BOTH should be). I hope that these items are soon addressed by the authors of this fine package.

That aside, the only DIFFICULT thing about TEXTPRO is understanding how such a GREAT PROGRAM can be PUBLIC DOMAIN! -- John Nagy)

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WHAT KIND OF PROGRAM SHOULD I BE WHEN I GROW UP?

by Bill Silverman

Reprinted from the newsletter of the Capitol District Atari Computer Enthusiasts, Albany NY

Atari folklore tells us that the world started with PONG, reached superlative heights with STAR RAIDERS and has been waiting for the next great step ever since. Having recently tinkered with the ST basic version of Star Trek from Antic I have found myself reflecting on the genealogy of Space games for Atari computers.

My favorite space games have been those that have emphasized strategy over brute arcade action. The original STAR RAIDERS is still the finest arcade action available and also incorporates strategy. The game, however, while truly superlative lacks depth, that is to say it is essentially one dimensional - find and destroy ZYLONS!!! On other hand, no one has has used an 8K cartridge as well before or since STAR RAIDERS and many purely arcade games using 48 or 64K do not measure up to it's standards of 3-D action.

My next game purchase was STAR TREK version 2.0 on a 32K tape written in Basic - yes that was a long time ago (early 1982). The graphics had color and a big blocky Enterprise that sped at Basic slow speed over a graphics 7 playfield with a standard text window at the bottom of the screen. Photon torpedoes plodded along towards stationary Klingon ships, phaser beams were plodding straight red lines drawn across the screen. This was a text game with limited graphics to brighten things up. But way back then it was great - strategy was delightful and real time tactical thought had to be made to successfully discover planets, destroy Klingons, repair your ship, defend star bases all within the time limit of your mission. By the way when this program is run in the fast mode with BASIC XE everything seems to fly.

Next came a Scot Adams space adventure called GALACTIC TRADER that was ported over from an Apple II. Graphically it had nothing (Apple translation!), sound was nothing (Apple translation!), but it had more rules than any space game I had played and it made things difficult. You had to plan, take risks, make a fortune or die young. It made the double secret probation of Animal House a small test. To figure this game out made my day.

Well, there I am, it's late 1982 I have the STAR RAIDERS cartridge and two 32K tapes. Collectively they were the perfect program. In the next couple of years two other programs came by that had fleeting moments - INVASION ORION another Apple retread with bad Apple graphics and sound matched with Atari's floating point routines made a missile shot a two minute math drill. But at least you now had to deal with a thinking computer opponent. Then came GALACTIC QUEST which was the first program to try and put all these things together in one program - some of it worked, the graphics were good, the sound effects used some of the machines capabilities, you traded, stole, connived, bought and sold commodities, pirates attacked your ship, you fought back, repaired your ship. Conceptually the program was great, operationally, well the company soon went out of business.

So the GREAT SPACE GAME remained to be written, produced, distributed. The years went by and Atari was Tramelized, the ST was born and this time a friendly little program - SUNDOG - wants to claim GREAT SPACE GAME title.

SUNDOG provides the player with a small galaxy with a host of planets that rely on traders to ferry goods between star systems. There are bad guys with varying degrees of bravery, armament and ability, commodity exchanges on every planet that rise and fall based on your deliveries and the passage of time, and a bank that is hoping you'll fail so it can get your ship to sell for a big fat profit.

What makes this game intriguing is the process of discovery that you experience the first two or three times you play the game. The instructions are clear enough so that you know how operate your ship and land rover, but leaves all the finesse and decision making up to you. The mission in SUNDOG is simple, complete a contract with a utopian group to stock their new colony with supplies and colonists and the ship is yours. Along the way make as much money for yourself as you can. But you have very limited resources at the beginning of the game and in your first game you have no idea what you should do. You have to solve all those keys yourself. If you like space simulations, like to spend hours solving puzzles, get into occasional space duels, and also commodities market trading on a galactic scale, check this game out.

SUNDOG's graphics are quite stunning using the low resolution mode to get 16 bright well defined colors on the screen. There are a few types of cities in the galaxy - urban, agrarian, mining, and utopian. Each community type has it's own unique set of buildings. The arcade combat in space is well done using the mouse for all control, in fact game is 100% mouse driven.

SUNDOG is on a copy protected disk with a suggested retail price of $39.95 (plus a secret $10.00 charge for a backup disk).

"Bounty Bob Strikes Back" Reviewed (finally!)

In his first installment of the ANALOG On Line article series, Blake Arnold takes a look at some classic 8bit game software. Bounty bob lives!

You'll never guess what I just got! Bounty Bob Strikes Back for my Atari 800. Sure, it's been out for a while (a few years maybe?), but I just got it a few days ago. In case you're not familiar with either Miner 2049'er or Bounty Bob Strikes Back, they're both similar to Donkey Kong, but with a twist. Bob (the chubby little guy that you control) has to go retrieve things that were abandoned in an old uranium mine. He also has to cover (walk on) all of the platforms; they fill in with color as he walks on them. If Bob leaves so much as one section without walking on it, he won't be allowed to leave that level. Being a uranium mine, the place is radioactive, and we all know what that does to life forms, don't we? That's right, it mutates them!

In the mine there are mutated creatures; should Bob touch one, he is instantly fried (fried may be an understatement!), or if he lingers too long in a room he will die of radiation poisoning. If Bob successfully (good luck) completes a room, he is sent to the next level. Each of the levels is a little harder than the other, but there is a way to skip some rooms. If you complete a certain number of rooms, you may see a secret message that will allow you to "warp" directly to that room again, without having to complete the entire series again (just think, I know a few of the warps... but I'm not telling you where they are!).

The game is supposed to be the sequel to Miner 2049'er. I feel a little sorry for Bob this time, though. This new version is a lot harder than the old Miner 2049'er was, even on its easiest screen. There's also lots of new devices to get Bob around; there are suction tubes (like huge vacuum cleaners..they suck Bob up at one place and put him down at another), elaborate slides, more hoists, and more moving platforms. There's so much going on in this new(?) game that it's unusual not to see at least one of those devices in a room. In fact, if you DON'T see one, sweat! Chances are if there's not one of them in the room, Bob has got some heavy-duty jumping to do! That's another point where this new (ok, "not so new") version differs; Bob can make jumps of different length by moving the joystick one way or the other (this can lead to sudden death if you forget about it and make Bob jump a little too far).

I've managed to struggle (like I said, this game is HARD) through quite a few of the screens on this game, and so far they've all offered more of a challenge that the "Zone 10" level of Miner 2049'er. The game contains many options that make it a constant challenge to play (or a little easier, if you like it that way). It's a well done game and, like the original, addictive. In fact, if you'll excuse me, I think I'll go see if I can beat my neighbors high score.

Bounty Bob Strikes Back is from Big Five Software, but I'm not sure if they're still in business. If you'd like to buy Bounty Bob Strikes Back (it's a cartridge), the best places to try would be the dealers who come to the SCAT meetings. If they can't help you, try large mail-order houses, or the places that specialize in rare merchandise like that, such as American TV, B & C Computervisions, or Electronic One (all advertise in ANALOG).

Blake Arnold
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If you've seen the great ST-COLOR graphics in SDI by Mindscape, then you already have a good idea what this program can do. And it's so user-friendly that even we Martians didn't need to look at the instruction manual! Features include "tweening", which lets you create the 1st & last cells, and the computer does all the work in between. Highly recommended.

The News Station $26.95
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Balance of Power

by Chris Crawford
Distributed by Mindscape
Review by Michael W. Riley

I am hard pressed for words to describe this 'simulation' created by many arduous hours of research and programming by ace game designer Chris Crawford. Mr. Crawford has attempted a feat unmatched by his contemporaries. He has tried to quantify the political powers which shape our world into a program which is more of a simulation than just another war game. This analysis of geopolitical forces in the nuclear age is the basis of this entertainment feat.

The premise is simple. You are the leader of the U.S.A. or U.S.S.R. and you must steer a course through history which will increase your country's prestige while at the same time avoiding annihilation of the human race. In other words, you get to play president. Only difference here is that you make all the decisions. Therefore, any mistake can only be blamed on yourself (and not the House or Senate).

The actual program is a port from an earlier Macintosh version of the game. This is evident in the title screen, which is a Mac-ish black and white collage of pictures indicating military, economic and diplomatic scenes. However, once past this initial introduction (as well as choosing the four types of games, nationality and 1-2 player options), the gamer is presented with a flat world map, colorfully displaying pertinent information in light or dark green or red. From here on, the fate of the world rests in your hands.

Among the many options players have to choose from, you may start by analyzing individual countries. All important information is just a mouse click away. Want to know the status of India? Just point to that country on the map and 'click.' Informative data on anything from newspaper stories to GNP on that country can be accessed. You can spend over an hour just analyzing these factors for the 62 countries represented in the game. However, once you are familiar with the world situation, you may begin to use your military strengths to start racking up prestige points for your country by sending weapons, troops or money to any country you desire. However, care should be taken with these decisions, since one wrong move could spell certain doom.

I haven't played the game enough to become familiar with the computer's (actually, Mr. Crawford's) tactics, but Mr. Crawford has written a fine 87 page manual which accompanies the game. A predominant feeling prevails in reading both the manual and a surprising comment if your game ends in failure (i.e. nuclear war). The feeling I perceived was that Mr. Crawford was very serious about this simulation, so serious in fact that he nearly "went bankrupt for this stupid game." Now that's what I call dedication.

In a nutshell, this program will only be enjoyed by those who intend to take its content seriously. This is a very cerebral game with a lot of factors going on at once. I can only recommend this entertainment package to a person with a rational, patient, and level headed personality, since this game is no Starglider. If you think you have the brains to run the country better than our leaders are, then this program has a lot to teach you.

Finally, I remember reading in a review of the Amiga version that the reviewer suggests political members running for office should successfully survive this game as a prerequisite to entering the presidential race. After experiencing this work of art, I'm ready to start that petition.

XM301 WARNING

By PAUL ALHART

Reprinted from the Atari Federation Newsletter via WAND. The Newsletter of the Atari Users Group of Westchester.

If you own an XM301 modem, you may own an electronic "Time Bomb." After a rash of hardware failures last month, which included smoking a disk drive and two printer interfaces, I found the cause of my problem to be my XM301. The modem worked fine, but was killing off my system piece by piece.

The reason has to do with the thirteen wires coming from the serial I/O plug, although only nine wires are actually used by the modem. The other four wires have about 1/8 inch bare wire showing, and are just hanging around, unterminated, waiting to touch something they shouldn't. I have checked other XM301 modems and this condition existed in them too.

Here is what to do IMMEDIATELY:

With all power OFF, remove the two screws from the bottom of the modem and lift off the plastic case. Inspect the wires where they enter the modem. You will find that four of the wires are not connected to anything. If these wires have ANY bare metal showing, cut it off. Be careful to keep the cut-off pieces from falling into the modem. Next, tape each wire individually, so that it cannot possibly touch any other wires or parts in the modem. Put the modem back in its case, replace the screws, and you are done. I have written to ATARI regarding this problem, but have not received a reply as yet.

Note: This may be an isolated problem, but when I checked my modem I found bare wires looking for trouble. I found heat shrink tubing worked best. If you own an XM301, I highly recommend checking for this potential disaster NOW!

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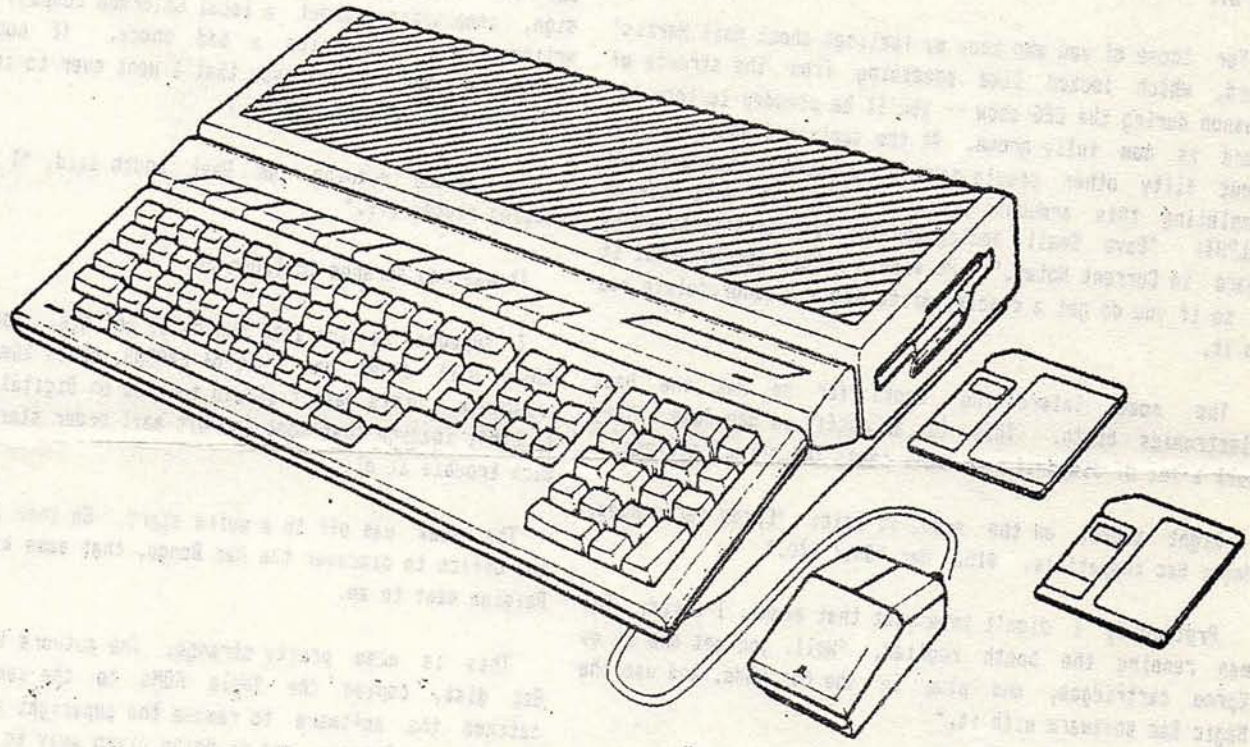

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THE ROCKY MOUNTAIN ATARI EXPO

and BEST Computer...and the Mac Bongo

by Dave Small

Reprinted from CURRENT NOTES.

The Rocky Mountain (read, "Denver") Atari Expo was Last weekend. I, along with Data Pacific, went to it.

It was successful. Atari was there, Dave Beckemeyer showed up, Supra, Astra...many of the companies active with the ST.

For those of you who know my feelings about Neil Harris' beard, which looked like something from the streets of Lebanon during the CES show -- you'll be pleased to know his beard is now fully grown. At the seminar I hosted, I and about fifty other people gave him a round of applause for completing this arduous project. (Or, as Neil said on DELPHI: "Dave Small apologized for his comments about my beard in Current Notes.") He *is* a little touchy about it , so if you do get a chance, write him and congratulate him on it.

The most interesting booth for me was the Best Electronics booth. This is an outfit in San Jose. They sell a lot of discontinued Atari parts to various dealers.

Right there, on the sign, it said: "Eprom cartridges. Magic Sac compatible. $15. Mac ROMs: $40."

Pretending I didn't know what that meant, I asked. The man running the booth replied, "Well, you get one of my Eprom cartridges, and plug in the Mac ROMs, and use the Magic Sac software with it."

Naturally, this made me feel great. This guy was selling cartridges to rip off a year of my life.

"But I don't want to pay $40 for some Mac ROMs," I said.

"Well", he replied, "I make EPROM copies all the time. They're the only ones that work in my cartridge. I made twenty or so and sent them to friends of mine. Just let me know how many you need."

Then, he pointed to my booth, slightly out of sight behind him.

"I hear Dave whathisname doesn't like this," he said, pointing to his Eprom cartridge.

Big surprise.

Well, what could I do? Murder is illegal in Colorado.

And unfortunately, I don't know anyone at Apple to let know about this person, who is busily ripping off their operating system for his cartridge. In the real Magic Sac, only real Apple ROMs work, the idea being that somewhere along the line, Apple got income out of those ROMs, be it to a dealer or end user.

It's a strange feeling, getting ripped off like this. But the final irony was still to come. Best had another sign, complaining about a local Colorado company that had written Best Electronics a bad check. (I hope you'll understand when I tell you that I went over to this local outfit and congratulated them.)

The person running the Best booth said, "I just hate getting ripped off."

It was too strange to laugh at.

I suppose in the long run he'll get his. Someone from Apple will order up a set of EPROMS, check them out, and prosecute. Apple wasn't afraid to take on Digital Research; I can't imagine that some two-bit mail order store would be much trouble at all.

The week was off to a weird start. So then I come into the office to discover the Mac Bongo, that some kind soul in Belgium sent to me.

This is also pretty strange. The authors took a Magic Sac disk, copied the Apple ROMs to the same disk, and patched the software to remove the copyright notices. It was done in Germany, and is being given away to anyone by a user group there; it reached the United States recently.

Of course, it's breathtakingly illegal to copy the Apple ROMs.

The documentation is written in German. I found someone on the BIX network willing to translate it for me.

The Mac Bongo was *almost* posted to Usenet, an international network. The guy who posted it said, "I think Dave Small just did a cartridge to increase his profits."

How naive. The cartridge is the most expensive part of the whole package. We'd gladly ditch it if we could. Alas, the Apple ROMs are copyrighted, and there's no other legal way to sell the product -- we have to provide some mechanism to get those ROMs into the computer, and the cartridge is it.

This same fellow, in Belgium, is the guy who took Atari's automatic hard-disk booter, stuck his name on it, and posted it to Usenet. It then went to Delphi and CompuServe, before someone at Atari recognized it as a ripoff and had it pulled.

I think sometimes of what would have happened if the Apple ROMs had been posted to a public network. It'd be like posting them to CompuServe. The term "fire and brimstone" comes to mind. Real Biblical stuff.

Mac Bongo has credits to several people in Germany (all pseudonyms) who did the work.

Personally, I have to wonder about anyone crazy enough to go through a program and remove a hundred separate checks for the ROMs being physically present, which is how many I put in there. (Ten sets of ten, well hidden.) What motivates people to do this? A weird terroristic urge? Hacker mania? "David Small making too much profits?"

Alas, they even picked the Magic Sac to rip off. They did version 2.00, which has a fair number of bugs. Now, 3.0 or even 3.5 I could see, but 2.00? Who wants it when things that are much better are easily available?

Not that the job is competently done. Basically, when the Mac Bongo people found stuff they didn't understand, which was all the time, they deleted it. The program manages to fumble along, but crashes a great deal. What's funny is that all the crashes are the same, pretty much, and I get calls about them on the tech support line at work. My advice is also the same: Don't try to use a ripped-off Magic Sac.

The motivator is also broken. They needed the space to wedge in their patch, so they switched it off. Their documentation says, "The Motivater never worked anyway..." Ha.

The Mac Bongo is being spread very quickly now; there's nothing that can be done to stop it, unfortunately. Yet I think it will disappear without a trace very shortly, like other bad ripoffs. The bad thing about the computer nets is how quickly news about a bad program can spread as well.

All I'd ask, if you feel like it, is to let people who have the Mac Bongo know that is quite buggy and generally the quality you'd expect from a crude ripoff. It's also the quality you'd expect of people without the brains to realize the sort of private investigators Apple computer can afford to hire to track them down.

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May Minutes

The meeting of the S.C.A.T. began at 11:20 on Saturday May 2 at the College of Dupage. Jeff Williams, the new President, proceeded with the introduction of the SIG's (ST, Beginner, & Midi) with the chairmen of each giving a brief outline of their purpose. Mike Cosentino offered to have the next MIDI meeting at his home above his store because he has all the equipment needed and nobody would need to bring anything.

Jeff then proceeded with the introduction of the new officers of the club. The introduction of the dealers (Jaf-Data, COZ Computers, Computer Cellar, Mars Merchandizing, and CSA Ltd.) and a description of their wares was made.

I was brought up that the position of Secretary will be vacant and it was asked that any interested person contact one of the club officers if they would like to assume the duties of the post. The office of Secretary is an appointed one and not elected.

The CLAUG user group has extended an invitation to members of SCAT to attend a dinner and meeting on June 1, 1987 at Triton College. The dinner will precede the meeting which starts at 8:30pm. It is not necessary to attend the dinner to attend the meeting. RSVP's were requested by phone no later than May 8th for the catered dinner portion of the evening, so if you not at the meeting, it is too late. Atari representatives and others will be attending the meeting and it should be an enjoyable event for all Atari enthusiasts.

Jeff proceeded with a discussion of Electronic Arts (EA) buyout of Batteries Included (BI). Trip Hawkins of EA was on CompuServe and answered a lot of questions pertaining to the buyout and the support that we can expect. Selected excerpts of the transcript were read, and it was mentioned that the entire transcript will be available for downloading from the SCAT BBS. In addition to the normal EA hotline number of 415-572-ARTS, there will be an additional hotline number setup for BI. The BI hotline number will be 415-578-0316.

General questions were then asked and break began at 12:30. Again, due to health problems I had to miss the last half of the meeting. I am confident that the rest of the minutes will be added to these.

In stepping down from the position of Secretary, I would like to take a moment to say 'THANKS' for giving me the opportunity to serve to Bob Dillon who appointed me. I think a lot of SCAT and all of the members, officers, and dealers that I have gotten to know. I still plan on attending as many of the meetings as possible and have enjoyed all that I have done and all that I have met. I wish the best for the club and hope that someone out there will volunteer that wants to get involved. Please do not be afraid. I had only been a member for 2 months and owned an Atari for 3 months when I asked for the position.

Donald A. Hedlund

President's Corner

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2

companies stupid enough to worry about us anymore. We hold the future of our computers in our hands. Will we rush headlong to our own destruction like our little lemming friends? We shall see.

I hope you will all be able to make it to our June meeting on the 6th. We will have Ken Reid giving a presentation on Turbo Basic, a supercharged Atari Basic for XL/XE computers...and guess what...it's in the public domain! Then we will have Alan Reeve showing us News Station ST and maybe one or two other goodies he's been cooking up. See you Saturday!

Trackball to Mouse

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

Now hook it up to the ST to make sure it works properly. Before you close it up, I recommend that you strain-relieve the cord. The easiest way to do this is to tie a knot in the cord where it exits the case (this will keep it from being accidentally pulled out of the trackball). Close it up and you're done.

Special thanks to Norm Weinress for info on the LM339 pinouts.

Blake Arnold (Delphi 1BLAKE)

N O T I C E S

SCAT general meetings are held on the first Saturday of each month at 11:00am. See the calendar for dates. The location is the College of Dupage - Student Resource Center, Lambert Rd. between Roosevelt and Butterfield Rds., Glen Ellyn, IL.

The Beginner's SIG meets at the College of DuPage at 10:00am (one hour before the regular meeting). [Chairmen: Tom Bartelt 637-5379 & Dan Hirschfeld 966-7187]

The ST SIG meets around the first Tuesday of each month at 7:00pm. See the calendar for the exact dates. All meetings are at the Roselle Public Library, Park Ave., Roselle, IL. [Chairman: Mike Yocum 469-4490]

The MIDI SIG meets on the third Tuesday of each month at times and locations to be announced. [Chairman Greg La Brec 425-2085]

The schedule and location of meetings are subject to change so be sure to look in the most recent newsletter for the correct date.

The deadline for submission of material or advertising copy for the newsletter is the 10th of the prior month. All material received after that date will be considered for inclusion in a future issue.

The SCAT Newsletter is a publication of the Suburban Chicago ATarians. Any comments or questions should be addressed to SCAT via P.O. Box 72266, Roselle, IL 60172. Or call any of the following officers:

Jeff Williams	President	587-5384
Ken Reid	Vice President	893-2913
Ron Rogers	Treasurer	824-0588
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S. C. A. T
Suburban Chicago Atarians

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Dues for SCAT are $15.00 a year per family. Additional membership cards are available for $1.00 each. To join, just fill out this questionnaire and bring it to the next meeting. If you are unable to attend the meeting, you can send it to: SCAT, P.O. Box 72266, Roselle, IL 60172

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Number of computers ____ Newest Model _____ Memory ____K
Modified? ___ How? _____
Number of Disk Drives ___ Brand(s) _____
Density _____ Modified? ___ How? _____
ATR? ___ Configuration _____
Cassette ___ Modem (Brand) _____ Interface _____
Printer (Brand) _____ Interface _____

16-BIT:
Number of computers ____ Newest Model _____ Memory ____K
Modified? ___ How? _____
Number of Floppy Disk Drives ___ Model(s) _____ Hard Disk? ___ Size ___MEG
Modified? ___ How? _____
Modem (Brand) _____ Printer (Brand) _____

Programming: Check the programming languages you use
None ___ Action! ___ Assembler ___ Basic ___ C ___ Cobol ___
Forth ___ Fortran ___ LISP ___ Logo ___ Modula2 ___ Pascal ___
Pilot ___ Prolog ___ RPG ___ Other(s) _____

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Do you own another brand of personal computer? ___
If so, which? _____

June 1987

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
	1	2 ST SIG	3	4	5	6 SCAT Meet COD
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16 Midi SIG	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

July 1987

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
			1	2	3	4 To Be Deter
5	6	7 ST SIG	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21 Midi SIG	22	23	24	25 Atari Fest
26 Atari Fest	27	28	29	30	31	

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